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SUGGESTIONS FOR PRIVATE DUTY SECTIONS

PROGRAMME committees have a more arduous task than is generally realized by those who enjoy—or criticize—the results. We know they are constantly looking for ideas.

A private duty nurse of much experience suggests that the JOURNAL could be made the basis for profitable discussion at meetings of Private Duty Sections of District Associations. The plan would be to appoint at each meeting a sufficient number of persons to read assigned portions of the latest JOURNAL. They would then be expected to give an analysis of the articles read, either as oral reports or as very brief papers.

The advantages to be gained would be many. Those listening and taking part in the discussions, as well as those who prepared the reports would widen their knowledge of our profession. It would also help to clarify ideas and would help diffident nurses, whose ideas are often exceedingly valuable, to develop some power of self expression. Miss Ruth Birchard, the author of the suggestion, analyzed the January JOURNAL as the background for her argument as follows:

Our JOURNAL! Do you get that! It is ours! It actually belongs to every nurse who has sufficient interest in her profession to become a member of her District Association. (It should be remembered, however, that it is available to all who care to subscribe whether they are A. N. A. members or not.) The editorials alone keep us informed on important developments in our profession and the resumé of the wonderful progress being made in the education of nurses is worthy of thoughtful consideration.

The article on Supervision is interesting and we liked the sentence, "Let us emphasize achievement in terms of actual preventive and remedial care rather than in terms of so many baths, and treatments, and nourishments." It could profitably be applied to the sick patient under general care in a hospital where graduate nurses are employed as well as in those where most of the actual nursing is done by students.

The stories of other nurses' experiences should bring out lively discussion and perhaps other good stories for publication. Useful information was gained from Applied Bacteriology. It is also much to the point in affirming the entity of nursing as a profession rather than as the prolonged arm of the physician. The Book Reviews are helpful in making a choice of reading matter. It might be of interest to appoint members to give oral reviews each month of other books

that seem of worth. No one has time to read all she would like nowadays and reviews are a useful means of guiding the busy nurse who tries to be discriminating and of helping her to keep up to date. The Letters to the Editor give opportunity for expression of opinion and those so minded can present a point of view without spending the time required for preparing a finished and comprehensive article.

This number of the JOURNAL reminds us that the Army and the U. S. Public Health Service are training nurses, that instructors and principals may go to Teachers College for post graduate work, that there are many special hospitals for those who wish to enter particular fields of nursing, and that Visiting Nurse Associations and some universities offer training in public health work. The question inevitably comes to mind, "What of the Private Duty Nurse?" Has she had generous opportunities and privileges equal to those of other fields? Is she as well prepared for her branch of nursing as are those who enter other fields?

Does not the answer rest with the private duty nurse, just as it did with all other groups? The Department of Nursing and Health at Teachers College grew out of the felt need of nurses who wished to become better teachers and administrators and to increase the supply of nurses well qualified for such positions. If private duty nurses feel that they need further advantages, is it not possible that they might be obtained by concerted action on their own part? Dissatisfaction is a sign of healthy growth if it provides the motive for constructive action.

The suggestion that the JOURNAL be used as a basis for discussion seems to be in the right direction. It is probable that private duty nurses need to get together more frequently for thoughtful discussion of the actual technic and problems of their own special field, just as those who belong in the group of educators have formed state and local leagues for the discussion of their own problems, and as public health nurses belong to the National Organization for Public Health Nursing with its enormously helpful resources. It should be remembered that those organizations grew from within, not from without. No group lives by itself, all are interdependent, but the strongest forces in nursing education today are those that have grown out of the constructively expressed needs of special groups.

Private Duty Sections are becoming more active, but we have not heard of groups of private duty nurses planning for the stimulation of such gatherings as institutes, although other groups are finding this an exceedingly useful way of exchanging experiences and of receiving inspiration and help. It must always be remembered that our schools are not primarily concerned to train specialists for any field. Their great problem is that of providing a sound foundation for all fields, just as the medical schools do. A well known superintendent some years ago said that, although she had been told

by her graduates that they had left the school unprepared for private duty, for institutional positions, or for public health work, a surprising number were highly successful! It is clear that no amount of training can take the place of individual initiative and effort.

Have private duty nurses really done all they can to help themselves? The very nature of private duty tends to make those who follow it individualists, but only by well organized and constructive plans, supported by the weight of collective opinion, can they hope to secure real community coöperation in bettering conditions that are becoming more unsatisfactory alike to nurses and to the public. We believe that unsuspected resources will be revealed by united action in placing emphasis, not on the commercial aspects of the field, but on such individual and collective achievements as bring both credit and satisfaction to any nurse worthy of the name, and by a sincere effort to view the situation as a part of the whole social and professional programme rather than as individual problems.

A BRILLIANT EVENT

ALMOST eight hundred people gathered in the blue and gold ball room of the Biltmore on February first to honor Miss Anna C. Maxwell, who, when she resigned her position at the Presbyterian Hospital of New York, had rounded out forty years of most distinguished nursing service.

Graduates of the Presbyterian Hospital School for Nurses, glowing with pride and affection, were everywhere, but the company also included many eminent representatives of the Schools and Boards of other hospitals and nursing organizations.

Those who attended the Nightingale Centennial dinner held in the same place some two years ago could not fail to compare the two events, each so brilliant in its own way. The Centennial dinner was a beautiful memorial; Miss Maxwell's dinner was a joyous celebration and the participants experienced all the gamut of emotions from grave to gay, from the profoundly stirring to the effervescent, that accompany such an event.

At Miss Maxwell's table was seated an illustrious group of seventeen people, many of whose names stand for notable achievements in other fields, but all of whose names have long been associated with philanthropic movements such as that for better nursing. Among the number were Mr. Thatcher M. Brown, Mrs. F. Everit Macy, Miss Ruth Morgan and Mr. Moreau Delano.

Dr. John H. Finley, long Commissioner of Education for New York, presided, stating that he was attempting to fill a place that rightfully belonged to Louisa Lee Schuyler. Dr. Finley introduced

himself as the man who had signed more nurses' certificates than any other man in the world! In a most graceful and witty fashion he called in turn upon those who could most fittingly speak of Miss Maxwell's many sided contribution to nursing.

Miss Nutting presented a letter from President Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia, in which he discussed the plan for the greater school of nursing in connection with the University, and then spoke on Nursing Education. Miss Nutting stressed the point that, although the patients of the Presbyterian Hospital had been exceedingly well nursed during Miss Maxwell's term of office, this had not been her larger task. That had been the instruction of a thousand nurses who have carried the technic and the spirit of good nursing with them into every state in the Union and to many foreign lands. The school too, has always been particularly cordial to students who have come from other countries to seek knowledge of American nursing methods. Miss Nutting also spoke of Miss Maxwell's courageous willingness to share the labor of working toward new and difficult ideals, of her genius for coöperation, and said, "If she had not helped to pave the way, I wonder if we would tonight have before us the inspiring picture of the great University School of Nursing which the development of the new Presbyterian Hospital and Medical School will make possible."

Dr. Brewer, Chief of the Surgical Service of the Presbyterian Hospital, felt that Miss Maxwell's achievements were most fittingly estimated by the achievements of her graduates and cited three nurses who had given such conspicuous service in France that they had won distinction in the French and British armies as well as in our own. Said Dr. Fisher, in speaking for the Board of Directors, "We have long claimed Miss Maxwell for our own, but we have come to realize that she belongs, not to the Presbyterian Hospital, but to the world."

Mrs. August Belmont spoke of the great Red Cross service flag at Washington with its blue and gold stars and of what it had meant to the Red Cross to have women like Miss Maxwell constantly supporting its efforts. Mrs. Belmont did not mention it, but it is well known that no nurse leaves the Presbyterian Hospital without having had the privilege of Red Cross enrollment presented to her in person.

"Standards and a punctilious technic have been among the most precious contributions of Miss Maxwell," said Dr. Haven Emerson, whose sympathetic and constructive interest in nursing is so well known. "Whatever Miss Maxwell's ambition for her profession, we shall know that her mind, her art, her determination will be to give her patients, whether babes or soldiers, whether tenement family, or city, or nation, something of nursing service a bit better than has

been studied out before, and then to so present it and fix it into the practice of the day, that the method, the art, the technic of the service will become a part of the creed and conscience of her successors." Miss Wald, too, spoke of Miss Maxwell's constant and sympathetic support of public health movements.

The alumnae of the three schools which have had the good fortune to be directed by Miss Maxwell were represented by speakers from the floor, as was also the New York State Nurses' Association. Miss Sara E. Parsons spoke of how Miss Maxwell always dignified labor, but of how she tactfully succeeded in relieving the nurses of the Massachusetts General Hospital of part of the burden of drudgery imposed upon them in the early days. Miss Amy M. Hilliard, representing St. Luke's Alumnae (New York), illustrated Miss Maxwell's gift for stimulating young graduates to further professional efforts by a story from her own experience, the point of which was that when she gave ignorance as a reason for refusing an arduous piece of Committee work, Miss Maxwell replied, "I know you don't know anything about it, *but you can learn*, can't you?" Miss Nancy E. Cadmus, of the Presbyterian Alumnae, quoted Dr. Richard Cabot's lines, "Where there is need for me, there is my home, and Heaven itself could offer no greater blessing," and concluded by saying that Miss Maxwell's home is in the hearts of her nurses.

The addresses and toasts were interspersed with letters and cablegrams of greeting, one of the latter being from Dr. Anna Hamilton, Director of the Nightingale School at Bordeaux, France.

Miss Goodrich was the last speaker of the evening and, in her own inimitably witty style, offered a very legal sounding brief proving conclusively that as Miss Maxwell is the possessor of a great gift it has been her duty to share it with the profession at large! So closed an event that most beautifully exemplified the spirit of those who, in the words of one of the speakers, "believe in giving roses while the recipients can smell them." Whatever Miss Maxwell's emeritus contribution may be, it must surely reflect something of the appreciation of her peers and of those who have thus proudly acknowledged their allegiance.

Much credit should be given Miss E. E. Pearce, and Miss Mary Parsons, Chairmen of the hardworking committees that carried the plan through in such charming fashion.

WHY SHOULD DUES BE RAISED?

IF any nurse who is a member of her state association were asked how our national association is supported, she would reply, quite truthfully, "By the dues of its members." If she were further asked,

"What is the amount of those dues?" she might not be able to answer, for the dues are paid by the state associations, from their dues, and so we are not individually conscious of paying to the American Nurses' Association, as we do, the small sum of fifteen cents a year.

It should be sufficient to state this amount as an answer to the question, Why should the dues be raised? It is an amusingly small sum, not enough to finance a state association, nor a district, nor an alumnae association,—how much less a national one.

If our national organization is to grow in power and influence, we must place it in a dignified position and furnish the means of carrying on its work.

The dues cannot be raised by any outside agency, they can be raised only by the members themselves, as represented by delegates at the convention, and they can be raised only to the point agreed upon by those present. The Revision Committee suggested, originally, that they be raised to thirty cents, but the directors felt that this would not be a sufficient increase to carry the work for very long, and that it would be better to raise the dues to fifty cents at this time rather than ask for another increase within a few years. It is hoped that the delegates at Seattle will approve this decision and that the American Nurses' Association may be placed on a sound footing for many years to come.

If any one wishes to know how the national funds are used, the treasurer's report, given at the convention, will show her.

AN IMPORTANT CONFERENCE

ALL nurses will be interested, it is believed, in the conference recently held in Washington of all commanding officers of hospitals concerned in the care of disabled ex-service men.

The conference was held under the auspices of the Federal Board of Hospitalization, of which Brigadier-General C. E. Sawyer is chief co-ordinator, in order to bring together the chiefs of all agencies and the commanding officers of all hospitals dealing with this problem, in an effort to co-ordinate the activities and to standardize the care of these government beneficiaries.

On Wednesday, January 18th, the subject of nursing was presented by Major Julia Stimson, and her paper was discussed by Mrs. Lenah Higbee, Superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps and Lucy Minnigerode, Superintendent of Nurses, U. S. Public Health Service.

Major Stimson's paper may be found on page 427 of this number of the JOURNAL. The discussions will be published in the April issue. It is amazing, but true, that no place in the report of the conference was given to this thoughtful and moving discussion of the nursing situation.

The JOURNAL hopes that nurses will be roused to a keener appreciation of and a more helpful attitude toward the efforts of the directors of our national nursing services to improve conditions to the end that all of the ex-service men, particularly the neuro-psychiatric, communicable disease and tuberculous patients may have the highly skilled and sympathetic care that is so essential to their recovery. Surely there can be found nowhere on this earth patients more deserving of the utmost we can give them. Let us not be among the number of those who can forget that to many of these men war was, and continues to be all that Sherman said of it!

SCHOOLS FOR NURSES IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

THE problems of health are well known to have been among the greatest of those faced by some of the European countries since the war. The whole world knows how generously the American Red Cross has helped to meet the need. A most constructive part of its plan is that of establishing schools for nurses, under the direction of American nurses, which are later to be turned over to properly qualified native nurses.

In this issue of the JOURNAL Miss Noyes describes the courageous work being carried on at Prague. Articles on the schools at Posen, Warsaw and Constantinople are to follow. Inasmuch as these schools must not only teach the care of the sick, but must also prepare young women for positions as directors and instructors for schools of nursing and also for the enormous field of public health nursing, the task is tremendous and far reaching in its influence. All honor to those nurses who have so dauntlessly undertaken these responsibilities. They are living up to and perpetuating an ideal that has been well expressed by Dr. C. E. A. Winslow, as follows:

The most brilliant exponent of Red Cross ideals in time of war has been the Red Cross nurse, but in time of peace her scope is an even wider one. In the campaign against disease, the nurse is not merely an agent for the alleviation of suffering, but also the most powerful force at our disposal for its prevention and control.

THE CIVIL SERVICE RECLASSIFICATION ACT

THE Sterling Bill so amended that nurses are placed in the professional grade, was reported out of committee to the Senate on February 6. The Lehlbach Bill, which passed the House, differs in a number of important respects from the Sterling Bill. Therefore, if the Sterling Bill passes the Senate, the two bills will go to conference and it is there that final efforts to classify nurses in the professional grade must be made. Nurses are urged to keep in touch with this legislation and to take appropriate action when the bills go to conference.